

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/681,712

Examiner

William T. Leader

Applicant(s)

NAKAMOTO ET AL.

Art Unit

1742

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to the response filed on 02 April 2004.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-17 and 19-22.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on 24 May 2001 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____.
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☐ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

The application has been amended as follows:

In the claims:

Claims 23-34 have been canceled.

COMMENTS

The claims directed to the nonelected inventions have been canceled.

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Applicant's Remarks with respect to the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph have been noted. Limitations similar to those recited in dependent claim 18 have been incorporated into independent claim 1, which now recites an "insulating adjustment plate comprising a plurality of windows corresponding to a plurality portions of the object to be plated." This limitation still

relates the structure of the apparatus to the object (workpiece) to be processed by the apparatus. The limitation is interpreted to require a plurality of windows which correspond to a plurality of portions of any workpiece that the apparatus is adapted to plate. It is not seen as being limited to a particular configuration of windows corresponding to portions of a particular workpiece.

The prior art of record does not disclose or suggest metal plating apparatus with the source material connected to a first terminal of a power supply and an object to be plated connected to a second terminal, and which includes the recited combination of the pair of conductive perforated plates and the insulating adjustment plate. As indicated in the previous office action, the Alkire et al patent discloses metal plating apparatus with conductive perforated electrode plates 110 and 114 which are electrically connected to each other through bus 112. Neither Alkire et al nor the other cited prior art suggests the additional inclusion of an insulating adjustment plate with a plurality of windows disposed between the object and the conductive perforated plate on the side of the object as now recited.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

3. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The Uzoh et al patent (6,261,426) is directed to a method and apparatus for enhancing the uniformity of electrodeposition or electroetching. The apparatus includes an insulating plate 8 with a plurality of openings positioned between the workpiece and the counter-electrode. See figure 1.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to William T. Leader whose telephone number is 571-272-1245. The examiner can normally be reached on Mondays-Thursdays and alternate Fridays, 7:30-4:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Roy King, can be reached on 571-272-1244. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Art Unit: 1742

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

WL
William Leader
June 9, 2004

R
ROY KING
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 1700